

Message Text

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ACTION ACDA-12

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FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 4756
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 GENEVA 00581

CW MESSAGE NO. 4

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PARM US UR
SUBJECT: US-USSR CHEMICAL WEAPONS NEGOTIATIONS, ROUND
SEVEN: SECOND PLENARY MEETING, JANUARY 12, 1978

REF.: 1. GENEVA 394, 2. GENEVA 409

1. SUMMARY: AT THE SECOND MEETING OF ROUND SEVEN, US
DEL MADE OPENING STATEMENT PRESENTING US POSITIONS ON
ISSUES WHICH SEPARATED THE TWO SIDES AT THE END OF THE
LAST ROUND (I.E., PRECURSORS, IRRITANT CHEMICALS,
TERMINOLOGY, VERIFICATION). DEL ALSO PRESENTED PRE-
LIMINARY COMMENTS ON SOVIET DRAFT ARTICLES I, II, III
AND X (REFS 1 AND 2). IT WAS AGREED THAT THE EXPERTS
WOULD BEGIN WORK IN THE DRAFTING GROUP ON RESOLVING THE
QUESTION OF HOW TO DEAL WITH IRRITANT CHEMICALS. END
SUMMARY.

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2. THE SECOND PLENARY MEETING OF ROUND SEVEN OF THE
US-USSR BILATERAL NEGOTIATIONS ON CHEMICAL WEAPONS (CW)
WAS HELD AT THE US MISSION AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 12.

3. AMBASSADOR A. S. FISHER (HEAD OF US DEL) PRESENTED
GENERAL POSITIONS ON ISSUES WHICH SEPARATED THE TWO

SIDES AT THE END OF ROUND SIX, AND INITIAL COMMENTS ON THE SOVIET PRESENTATION OF JANUARY 10. SALIENT POINTS FOLLOW BELOW.

A. PRECURSORS - FISHER WELCOMED SOVIET AGREEMENT WITH US VIEW THAT PRECURSORS BE SUBJECT TO GENERAL PURPOSE CRITERION. HE REITERATED US ROUND SIX PROPOSAL TO HAVE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE DRAW UP BRIEF LIST OF IMPORTANT PRECURSORS AS AID TO INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND VERIFICATION AND STATED THAT US SIDE HAD FURTHER DEVELOPED ITS POSITION ON THE LIST IN GREATER DETAIL. FISHER STATED THAT THE US BELIEVES THAT ANY PRECURSOR WHICH: (A) COULD BE EASILY CONVERTED TO ANOTHER CHEMICAL USEFUL PRIMARILY FOR CW PURPOSES, (B) COULD NOT BE EASILY SUBSTITUTED OR REPLACED BY ANOTHER COMMERCIAL PRECURSOR AND (C) WHICH WOULD REQUIRE DIVERSION OF A SIGNIFICANT FRACTION OF PRODUCTION TO OBTAIN A MILITARILY IMPORTANT QUANTITY OF A LETHAL OR OTHER HIGHLY TOXIC CHEMICAL SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AN "IMPORTANT" PRECURSOR AND, THEREFORE, INCLUDED IN THE LIST. HE ADDED THAT LIST WOULD NOT DEFINE THE PROHIBITION BUT INSTEAD WOULD PROVIDE A BASIS FOR INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND REPORTING AND COULD PROVIDE ONE BASIS FOR REQUESTS FOR CHALLENGE INSPECTIONS.

B. IRRITANTS - FISHER SAID HE HAD NOTED WITH INTEREST THE SOVIET SUGGESTION, MADE JANUARY 10 (SEE REF 1.), TO USE A SUPPLEMENTARY CRITERION BASED ON A SPECIFIC VALUE OF THE "LEVEL OF HARMFULNESS." HE SAID THE US

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BELIEVES A THRESHOLD CAN BE ESTABLISHED TO SEPARATE DANGEROUS IRRITANTS (WHICH WOULD BE PROHIBITED UNDER THE CONVENTION) FROM RIOT CONTROL CHEMICALS (WHICH US PROPOSES NOT TO PROHIBIT), BUT THAT THIS COULD NOT BE DONE SOLELY ON THE BASIS OF QUANTITATIVE TOXICITY LEVELS. HE STRESSED THAT SUCH FEATURES AS THE NATURE AND DURATION OF EFFECTS MUST BE CONSIDERED IN SETTING THE THRESHOLD, AND THAT CHEMICALS CURRENTLY USED FOR RIOT CONTROL PURPOSES SHOULD BE EXEMPT.

C. SCOPE - FISHER COMMENTED THAT FAILURE TO AGREE ON COMMON TERMINOLOGY PROVED TO BE MAJOR STUMBLING BLOCK IN DRAFTING LANGUAGE ON SCOPE DURING ROUND SIX, AND THAT THE US SIDE WAS PLEASED THE SOVIET SIDE WAS DROPPING USE OF TERMS "SINGLE-PURPOSE" AND "DUAL-PURPOSE." HE ADDED THAT HE HOPED THE SOVIET SIDE WOULD BE ABLE TO AGREE TO DROP THE TERM "CHEMICAL AGENT" AS WELL, SINCE HE BELIEVED THE US TERMINOLOGY, AS CONTAINED IN OUR REVISED KEY ELEMENTS 6 AND 7, PROVIDED A MORE EFFECTIVE APPROACH.

D. AGREED INSPECTIONS - FISHER REAFFIRMED US POSITION THAT CONVENTION SHOULD CONTAIN PROVISIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL ON-SITE INSPECTION OF DESTRUCTION OF STOCKS,

DISPOSITION OF FACILITIES, AND FACILITIES PERMITTED TO PRODUCE SUPER-TOXIC CHEMICALS FOR PURPOSES SPECIFIED IN THE CONVENTION. HE STATED THAT HE BELIEVED ACCEPTABLE PROCEDURES FOR SUCH INSPECTIONS COULD BE DEVELOPED.

E. CHALLENGE INSPECTIONS - FISHER STATED THAT THE US WAS NOW PREPARED TO ACCOMMODATE THE SOVIET SIDE ON A NUMBER OF POINTS RELATED TO CHALLENGE INSPECTIONS. HE SAID WE AGREED THE REQUEST SHOULD COME ONLY FROM A STATE PARTY, BUT THAT OUR POSITION WAS THAT THE CHALLENGING STATE COULD REQUEST THE PARTICIPATION OF REPS FROM THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE. A STATE RECEIVING A CHALLENGE COULD ALSO REQUEST CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION. FISHER STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT THE CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE WOULD NOT TAKE ANY DECISION TO INITIATE A REQUEST FOR A

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CHALLENGE INSPECTION. FISHER STATED THAT A CHALLENGED

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 GENEVA 00581

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PARTY COULD REFUSE ANY REQUEST FOR CHALLENGE INSPECTION, BUT MUST THEN ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY FOR MAKING A "REASONABLE EFFORT" TO RESOLVE THE DOUBTS WHICH LED TO THE

CHALLENGE--NO ARBITRARY REFUSAL WOULD BE CONSIDERED
ACCEPTABLE.

4. FISHER THEN OFFERED SOME PRELIMINARY COMMENTS ON THE SOVIET DRAFT ARTICLES ON SCOPE (SEE REF 2.), PRESENTED AT THE LAST PLENARY MEETING. HE STRESSED, HOWEVER, THAT HIS COMMENTS IN NO WAY PREJUDGED US POSITION REGARDING THE FORM OF THE JOINT INITIATIVE.

A. REGARDING ARTICLE I, FISHER NOTED THAT THERE WAS NO DIRECT MENTION OF PRECURSORS AND THAT ONLY ONE OF THE TWO TOXICITY THRESHOLDS DISCUSSED IN PREVIOUS ROUNDS WAS MENTIONED AND ASKED FOR CLARIFICATION OF THE NEW TERMS USED IN THE ARTICLE.

B. ARTICLE II, HE SAID, APPEARED TO BE SIMPLY AN ABRIDGED VERSION OF AN EARLIER SOVIET ARTICLE AND STILL NOT ACCEPTABLE IN THE US VIEW SINCE WE BELIEVE
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FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS IN CHEMICAL WARFARE CLEARLY WOULD BE INCLUDED WITHIN THE SCOPE OF THE PROHIBITION.

C. REGARDING ARTICLE III, FISHER NOTED THAT THE REVISED ARTICLE APPEARED TO BE WORDED IN A MORE GENERAL WAY THAN THE VERSION AGREED AD REFERENDUM DURING ROUND SIX.

D. ARTICLE X - FISHER QUESTIONED THE PROVISION ALLOWING EACH PARTY TO DETERMINE UNILATERALLY THE TYPES AND QUANTITIES OF CHEMICALS TO BE RETAINED FOR PERMITTED PURPOSES SPECIFIED IN THE CONVENTION (E.G. PROTECTIVE RESEARCH), AND STATED THAT THE US COULD NOT AGREE WITH THAT VIEW.

5. IN CLOSING, FISHER ACKNOWLEDGED SOVIET DEL'S JANUARY 10 REMARKS ON THE UN SPECIAL SESSION ON DISARMAMENT (SSOD), THE 32ND UNGA RESOLUTION ON CW, AND CCD EXPECTATIONS (SEE REF 1.). HE STATED THAT THE US DEL, AS WELL, FELT THE URGENCY TO REACH AGREEMENT ON A JOINT INITIATIVE, BUT DID NOT WISH TO SUGGEST THAT ANY DEADLINE COULD BE IMPOSED. HE SAID DELS MUST TAKE WHAT EVER TIME IS NECESSARY TO RESOLVE THE IMPORTANT DIFFERENCES WHICH REMAIN. HE POINTED OUT THAT THE US AND USSR WOULD PAY A POLITICAL PRICE, PARTICULARLY WITH RESPECT TO THE CCD, IF CW JOINT INITIATIVE HAS NOT BEEN COMPLETED BY THE OPENING OF THE SSOD. CONVERSELY, BOTH WOULD DERIVE POLITICAL BENEFIT IF THE INITIATIVE WERE COMPLETED BEFORE SOOD. (FYI: IN COMMENTING ON THIS POSITION OF US STATEMENT, LIKHATCHEV SUGGESTED THAT US AND USSR DEL HEADS COULD USE THEIR POSITION AS CCD CO-CHAIRMEN TO PREVENT CCD FROM FORCING ESTABLISHMENT OF NEGOTIATING WORKING GROUP ON CW BEFORE JOINT INITIATIVE IS COMPLETED. END FYI.)

6. V. I. LIKHATCHEV (HEAD OF SOVIET DEL) DEFERRED COM-

MENTING ON US STATEMENT UNTIL SOVIET DEL HAD OPPORTUNITY
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TO REVIEW IT, BUT SUGGESTED THAT IT MIGHT BE "PRACTICAL"
TO ENTRUST EXPERTS WITH TASK OF WORKING ON THE ISSUE OF
IRRITANTS IN THE DRAFTING GROUP BEGINNING FRIDAY, JANUARY
13. ON BASIS OF FISHER COUNTER-PROPOSAL, IT WAS AGREED
THAT DRAFTING GROUP WOULD BEGIN WITH IRRITANTS, BUT COULD
ALSO DEAL WITH OTHER MATTERS RELATED TO SCOPE. FIRST
MEETING OF THE DRAFTING GROUP WILL BE AFTERNOON OF
FRIDAY, JANUARY 13.

7. NEXT PLENARY MEETING WILL BE AFTERNOON, MONDAY,
JANUARY 16.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: IN PREPARING FOR DRAFTING GROUP
SESSIONS ON "SCOPE" - TO BE HELD NEXT WEEK - WE NEED TO
KNOW WITHIN NEXT FEW DAYS IF THE US HAS ANY SUPER-TOXIC
CHEMICALS (LCT50 2,000 MG-MIN/M3 BY INHALATION OR
LD50 - 0.5 MG/KG BY SUBCUTANEOUS INJECTION) WHICH ARE
USED FOR MILITARY PURPOSES NOT REPEAT NOT RELATED TO
CHEMICAL WARFARE. SORENSEN

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